

the condition of education 2004



INDICATOR 29

Employees Who Study

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2004*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2004* visit the NCES web site (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2004077>) or contact ED PUBs at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

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Characteristics of Postsecondary Students

Employees Who Study

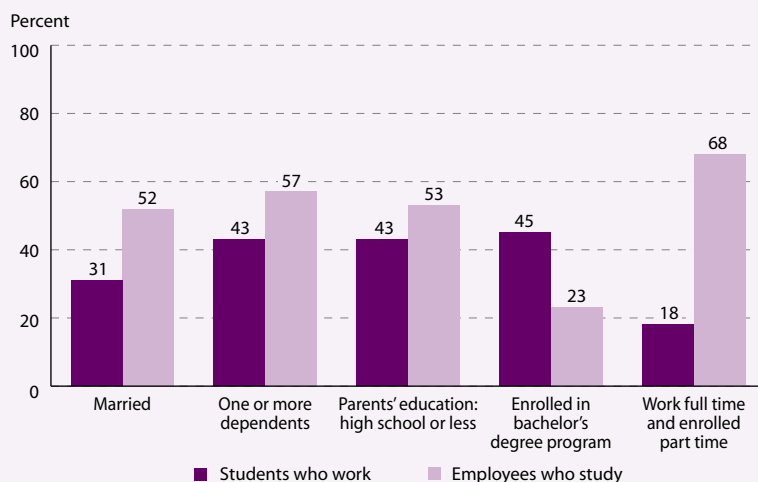
Many older undergraduates are employees first and students second. They are less likely to complete their postsecondary programs than are older students who work to meet their educational expenses.

Approximately one-third of undergraduates are older students who are combining school and work: 43 percent of 1999–2000 undergraduates were age 24 and above, and, of those students, 82 percent worked while enrolled (NCES 2002–168). Furthermore, about two-thirds of these older working students characterized themselves as primarily “employees who studied,” as opposed to “students who worked to meet their educational expenses” (NCES 2003–167).

As a group, older students who focus primarily on their jobs have different demographic, employment, and attendance profiles than their counterparts who work to help pay for their education. For example, in 1999–2000, employees who studied were more likely to be married, have dependents other than a spouse, and have parents who did not attend college. Reflecting their primary focus on their jobs, they were more likely to work full time and to be enrolled part time. In addition, employees who studied were less likely than students who worked to be enrolled in a bachelor’s degree program.

Part-time attendance and full-time employment are both independently associated with lower rates of persistence in college and degree attainment (NCES 96–155; NCES 97–578). This suggests that older working students who are primarily employees are less likely to complete their postsecondary programs than their peers who are primarily students. Indeed, among older working students who began their postsecondary education in 1995–96 and had a degree or certificate goal, those who characterized themselves as primarily employees were more likely than those who considered themselves as primarily students to have left postsecondary education without an award within 6 years (55 vs. 38 percent) (see supplemental table 29-1). Among older working students with bachelor’s degree goals, students who work were also more likely than employees who study to have completed a bachelor’s degree after 6 years (34 vs. 8 percent). Among students with certificate or associate’s degree goals, no difference was observed between employees who study and students who work in the attainment rates of their respective goals.

CHARACTERISTICS OF OLDER UNDERGRADUATES: Percentage of undergraduates age 24 and above with various characteristics, by student/employee role: 1999–2000



SOURCE: Berker, A., and Horn, L. (2003). *Work First, Study Second: Adult Undergraduates Who Combine Employment and Postsecondary Enrollment* (NCES 2003–167), tables 2, 4, 5, 8, and 10. Data from U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 1999–2000 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:2000).

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Supplemental Note 3
Supplemental Table 29-1
NCES 96–155
NCES 97–578
NCES 2002–168



Employees Who Study

Table 29-1. Percentage distribution of 1995–96 beginning postsecondary students age 24 and above with a degree goal by highest degree attained in June 2001, by student/employee role when first enrolled and degree goal : 2001

Degree goal	No degree attained, not enrolled in 2001	No degree attained, enrolled in 2001	Any degree or certificate attained	Highest degree attained		
				Certificate	Associate's	Bachelor's
Students who work ¹						
Total with degree or certificate goal	38.3	17.5	44.2	21.8	12.8	9.7
Certificate goal	42.5	4.3!	53.2	51.6	1.7	‡
Associate's degree goal	38.1	27.0	34.9	8.6	21.1	5.2
Bachelor's degree goal	32.4	16.6	51.1	5.9	11.2	34.1
Employees who study ¹						
Total with degree or certificate goal	54.8	8.4	36.8	28.1	7.1	1.6
Certificate goal	46.1	5.9!	48.0	44.9	3.1	‡
Associate's degree goal	62.6	5.7	31.7	22.1	9.5	0.1
Bachelor's degree goal	53.6	19.6	26.7	9.1	9.4	8.2

!Interpret data with caution (estimates are unstable).

+Reporting standards not met (too few cases).

¹Students were asked if they had any jobs for pay during the academic year including work study and assistantships. If the student reported any jobs for pay, they were then asked, "While you were enrolled and working, would you say you were primarily a student working to meet expenses or an employee who decided to enroll in school?"

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: Berker, A., and Horn, L. (2003). *Work First, Study Second: Adult Undergraduates Who Combine Employment and Postsecondary Enrollment* (NCES 2003–167), table 19. Data from U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 1995/96 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, Second Follow-up (BPS:96/01).

Employees Who Study

Table S29. Standard errors for the percentage of undergraduates age 24 and above with various characteristics, by student/employee role: 1999–2000

Student/employee role	Married	One or more dependents	Parents' education: high school or less	Enrolled in bachelor's degree program	Work full time and enrolled part time
Students who work	1.08	1.06	1.06	1.23	1.00
Employees who study	0.99	0.90	0.98	0.84	0.89

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 1999–2000 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:2000).

Employees Who Study

Table S29-1. Standard errors for the percentage distribution of 1995–96 beginning postsecondary students age 24 and above with a degree goal by highest degree attained in June 2001, by student/employee role when first enrolled and degree goal: 2001

Degree goal	No degree attained, not enrolled in 2001	No degree attained, enrolled in 2001	Any degree or certificate attained	Highest degree attained		
				Certificate	Associate's	Bachelor's
Students who work						
Total with degree or certificate goal	5.76	4.79	5.35	4.08	4.30	3.10
Certificate goal	9.58	4.19	9.31	9.21	1.11	‡
Associate's degree goal	9.72	8.97	8.59	5.04	8.24	3.34
Bachelor's degree goal	9.87	6.35	10.65	3.83	6.35	10.88
Employees who study						
Total with degree or certificate goal	4.68	2.42	4.69	4.21	2.12	0.56
Certificate goal	8.01	5.22	7.98	7.98	2.07	‡
Associate's degree goal	8.21	2.61	7.80	5.98	3.91	0.10
Bachelor's degree goal	7.89	4.87	6.72	4.25	4.74	2.99

‡Reporting standards not met (too few cases).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 1995/96 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, Second Follow-up (BPS:96/01).